

# Virginia’s vets honored on National Vietnam Veterans Day

Dozens of Vietnam-era veterans were honored with a ceremony and special pin during a Vietnam Veterans Day commemoration March 29, 2019, at the Sitter and Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond, Virginia.

The ceremony, hosted by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, featured Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Carlos Hopkins, and commander of the Virginia Air National Guard, Brig. Gen. Jeffery Ryan. Walt Mercer, chief operations officer for the Department of Military Affairs, and Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Smith, Jr., Virginia Army Guard command sergeant major, also participated in the ceremony, which saw 88 total veterans honored with the special pin.

“On this day, Virginians join Americans across the nation to celebrate and honor our Vietnam War veterans, who stepped up and answered the call to serve,” said Northam. “I am grateful for the service and sacrifice of these brave men and women, and for their continuing contributions to this country and this Commonwealth.”

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/04/03/12887/>



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Virginia National Guard News Headlines

VNG supports law enforcement operation resulting in hundreds of arrests

The Virginea National Guard joined more than a dozen law enforcement agencies throughout the Roanoke Valley announcing the results of Operation Triple Beam, an intensive law enforcement operation that recently came to a successful conclusion, April 1, 2019, in Roanoke, Virginia.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/04/02/12900/>

18th Field Hospital trains on renovated range at SMR

Soldiers assigned to the U.S. Army Reserve’s 18th Field Hospital conducted their annual weapons qualification March 24, 2019, at the newly-renovated range at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/04/01/12892/>

VNG youth opportunities in honor of Month of the Military Child

For more than 30 years, the Department of Defense has recognized the month of the military child in April to underscore the important role military children play in the armed forces community.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/04/03/12910/>

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Month events planned

The Virginia National Guard is joining Defense Supply Center Richmond and the U.S. Army Reserve’s 80th Training Command for a series of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Month events in April 2019.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/03/28/12871/>

Join the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard or the Virginia Defense Force

For information about joining the Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia Air National Guard or Virginia Defense Force, visit the appropriate link below:

Va. Army National Guard

<http://nationalguard.com/va>

Va. Air National Guard

<https://www.192fw.ang.af.mil/join>

Va. Defense Force

<http://vdf.virginia.gov/joinvdf/>

# VDF conducts communications, security training

Members of the all-volunteer Virginia Defense Force conducted communications and security operations training March 15-17, 2019, at Fort Pickett, Virginia. Nearly 200 personnel participated in security training focused on vehicle inspection and traffic control, and communications training featuring classroom instruction and hands-on high frequency radio employment for voice and data messaging.

"We met our goals of conducting a wide variety of training focused on our communication and civil support / security specialties, and we received very positive feedback about the well-planned and professionally executed hands-on training," said Lt. Col. (Va.) Donald J. Thornley, VDF operations officer. "Training tasks included vehicle search and traffic control practical exercises, driver training and a communications exercise with both voice and data where we were able to send email messages via high frequency radio."

The training weekend also included several external organizations with the Civil Air Patrol taking part in the communications exercise and the VDF chaplains conducting a joint chapel service March 17 with chaplains from the West Virginia National Guard, Thornley said.

Brig. Gen. Lapthe Flora, Virginia National Guard Assistant Adjutant General – Army, toured the different training sites March 16, and he also took part in the Officer Candidate School commissioning ceremony for four new officers and one new warrant officer after completing the 15-month OCS program.

Flora promoted Mark David Bergeron, Mark Russell Royce, Hyun Namkung and Eric Brian Schrock to second lieutenant and Angela Nichole Easton to warrant officer one. Bergeron was recognized as the distinguished graduate.

Flora also recognized Sgt. (Va.) Anthony W. Midgett, Jr., the VDF Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, and Midgett was also recognized at the final formation March 17.

Thornley said the VDF conducted additional training and development of their National Guard Support Teams that will have habitual relationships with VNG staff functions like Emergency Support Function 16, the VNG's response cell in the Virginia Emergency Operations Center, the logistics operations center, the joint communications section and public affairs office. When the VNG is activated for state emergency duty, the VDF will provide personnel to work side-by-side with their designated section.

The VDF also conducted training on the regional liaison resource to support VDEM's seven regions and help maintain effective information flow between the regions, the state and Guard forces positioned to provide support where needed.

For members of the VDF, attending the training weekend offers an opportunity to put civilian skills to use, share them with other members and take new skills back to their full-time jobs.

Cpl. (Va.) Andrew Tribble said he joined the VDF for an opportunity to serve in addition to working as county deputy sheriff and to share his law enforcement experience with others in the organization.



**Members of the all-volunteer Virginia Defense Force conduct communications training March 16, 2019, at Fort Pickett, Virginia.**

"I really enjoy the camaraderie, the military atmosphere and the opportunity to come to Fort Pickett and train," Tribble said. "My favorite thing is to be able to put on the uniform and serve. Joining the VDF is one of the best decisions I have made, and I have met so many good people."

Tribble said that even those who don't have experience in public safety can learn new skills and apply them to their VDF mission.

"Being able to translate civilian experience into skills you can give to other people and then they can apply those skills in the field is really rewarding and empowering," Tribble said.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/03/21/12902/>

## MORE ON THE WEB

### Virginia Airmen recognized for life saving actions

<https://go.usa.gov/xmcfD>

### Soldiers wanted to volunteer for Esports Tournament

<https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/03/28/12876/>

### Adjutant General sponsoring recruiting poster contest

<https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/03/28/12881/>

### Photos: Ribbon cutting celebrates Fort Pickett gym

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157707616648455>

### Photos: Va. HART practices hoist capabilities

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157679468402858>



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